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Dr. Joshua Lederberg  
The Rockefeller University  
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Dear Joshua,

I am responding to your questions about *lac*. Overexpression of LacY is harmful or lethal to cells. However, this is particularly true of membrane proteins, in general, and probably not peculiar to Lac. I don't know of any studies on whether lactose itself might make things worse. Benno Muller-Hill has a number of papers on overexpression of LacY and Tom Wilson has also found lethality associated with it. Overexpression of LacZ has not been associated with any deleterious effects that I know of.

We have in our collection the set of mapping deletions for *lacZ*. We haven't worked with them in a long time, so I don't know what shape they're in.

Thanks for the reprints. I love seeing the old papers.

Yours,

Jon Beckwith

